

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 271080

17

ORIGIN OES-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ACDA-07 PM-04 SS-15 CIAE-00

INR-07 IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-07 NRC-05 DODE-00

ERDA-05 FEA-01 AID-05 CEA-01 CIEP-01 COME-00 FPC-01

H-02 INT-05 OMB-01 USIA-06 SAM-01 SP-02 STR-04

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S/S - MR. ORTIZ

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P R 032349Z NOV 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY

INFO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 271080

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, TECH, BE

SUBJECT:USE OF HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM FOR RESEARCH
APPLICATIONS

1. AS EMBASSY IS AWARE, LICENSE APPLICATION FOR EXPORTS OF
NUCLEAR MATERIAL ARE REFERRED BY THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY
COMMISSION (NRC) TO THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH, WHERE THEY ARE
CAREFULLY REVIEWED ON AN INTERAGENCY BASIS, AND A JUDGMENT
REACHED AS TO WHETHER FAVORABLE RECOMMENDATION SHOULD BE
MADE TO NRC. UNDER LONG-STANDING POLICY, WHICH IS REFLECTED
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PAGE 02 STATE 271080

IN MOST U.S. BILATERAL AGREEMENTS FOR COOPERATION ON CIVIL

USES OF ATOMIC ENERGY, SUPPLY OF HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM (ISOTOPIC CONTENT OF MORE THAN 20 PERCENT U-235) IN LIMITED QUANTITIES FOR RESEARCH REACTOR AND SIMILAR USES IS PERMITTED, AT U.S. DISCRETION, WHERE USE OF HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM IS TECHNICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY JUSTIFIED. APPLICATIONS FOR EXPORT OF SUCH MATERIAL ARE REVIEWED BY EXECUTIVE BRANCH WITH SPECIAL CARE IN VIEW OF ITS POTENTIAL FOR USE IN NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES IN CASE OF THEFT OR DIVERSION.

2. IN CONNECTION WITH THIS EXECUTIVE BRANCH REVIEW OF EACH EXPORT LICENSE APPLICATION FOR HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM, WE ARE NOW REQUESTING PROPOSED END USERS OF SUCH MATERIAL TO REVIEW THEIR PENDING REQUESTS FOR THIS TYPE OF MATERIAL AND

INFORM US WHETHER THE NEEDS COVERED BY THESE SPECIFIC REQUESTS COULD BE SATISFIED BY THE USE OF ENRICHED URANIUM OF 20 PERCENT, OR LOWER, ENRICHMENT WHICH IS NOT REGARDED AS WEAPONS GRADE MATERIAL. ACCORDINGLY, EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO ASK APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES IN HOST GOVERNMENT WHETHER REQUIREMENTS FOR HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM IN THE FOLLOWING PENDING EXPORT LICENSE APPLICATION CAN BE MET ON A TIMELY BASIS THROUGH USE OF URANIUM ENRICHED TO A 20 PERCENT, OR LESS IN U-235:

-- 76.3905 KILOGRAMS OF URANIUM ENRICHED TO A MAXIMUM OF 93.3 PERCENT U-235. FUEL ELEMENTS FOR THE MATERIAL TEST REACTOR BR-2. CENTRE D'ETUDE DE L'ENERGIE NUCLEAIRE C.E.N./S.C.K., MOL, BELGIUM.

3. WE WISH TO STRESS THAT THE QUESTION WE ARE POSING IS NOT REPEAT NOT WHETHER 20 PERCENT ENRICHED URANIUM CAN EVENTUALLY BE SUBSTITUTED FOR HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM THROUGH REDESIGN OF FUEL ELEMENTS, REACTORS, OR SIMILAR MEASURES, BUT RATHER WHETHER THESE CURRENT REQUIREMENTS CAN BE MET ON TIMELY BASIS, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT AVAILABILITY OF FABRICATION SERVICES FOR 20 PERCENT ENRICHED FUEL ELEMENTS AND RELATED FACTORS. IN OTHER WORDS, WE WISH TO KNOW WHETHER 20 PERCENT MATERIAL CAN BE USED UNDER CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES, NOT REPEAT NOT ON BASIS OF SIGNIFICANT MODIFICATIONS IN REACTOR OR ITS OPERATING CHARACTERIS-
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PAGE 03 STATE 271080

TICS. WE ARE NOT REQUESTING A FULL-SCALE STUDY OF FEASIBILITY OF CONVERSION TO 20 PERCENT OPERATION, BUT SIMPLY A PROMPT RESPONSE BASED ON AVAILABLE INFORMATION. YOU SHOULD STRESS THAT OUR REQUEST FOR THIS INFORMATION DOES NOT REFLECT ANY CHANGE IN U.S. POLICY CONCERNING SUPPLY OF HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM FOR RESEARCH USES. RATHER, IT IS INFORMATION NEEDED TO ALLOW US TO IMPLEMENT THIS POLICY EFFECTIVELY, AND THAT THE NEED FOR THIS

INFORMATION IS FORESEEN BY THE PROVISION OF U.S. BILATERAL AGREEMENTS FOR COOPERATION WHICH ALLOWS DISTRIBUTION OF HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM AT U.S. DISCRETION WHEN TECHNICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY JUSTIFIED.

4. FYI. EXECUTIVE BRANCH IS REVIEWING GENERAL POLICY OF SUPPLY OF HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM FOR RESEARCH REACTOR AND RELATED USES. THIS STUDY WILL CONSIDER COSTS AND BENEFITS OF CONVERTING SUCH REACTORS, AND THEIR FUEL ELEMENTS, TO USE OF LOWER ENRICHED FUEL, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT AVAILABILITY AND COSTS OF FABRICATION SERVICES FOR LOWER ENRICHED MATERIAL, EFFECTS ON REACTOR EFFICIENCY, AND RELATED FACTORS. STUDY MAY OR MAY NOT RESULT IN DECISION TO CURTAIL DISTRIBUTION OF HEU FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES. PENDING COMPLETION OF STUDY, WE ARE ANXIOUS TO AVOID

SPECULATION WHICH COULD INDUCE FOREIGN ENRICHMENT PLANT OPERATORS TO DECIDE TO PRODUCE HEU. FOR SAME REASON, WE INTEND, PENDING COMPLETION OF STUDY, TO CONTINUE EXISTING POLICY OF DISTRIBUTION OF HEU WITHOUT CHANGE AND, HOPEFULLY, WITHOUT EXTENSIVE DELAYS IN EXECUTIVE BRANCH REVIEW OF LICENSE APPLICATIONS WHICH HAVE OCCURRED RECENTLY. PROMPT RECEIPT OF REQUESTED INFORMATION FROM HOST GOVERNMENTS, WHICH WILL HENCEFORTH BE REQUESTED ROUTINELY FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE BRANCH RECEIPT OF LICENSE APPLICATIONS FOR HEU, WILL ENABLE US TO MEET OUR OBJECTIVE OF TIMELY REVIEW OF REQUESTS FOR SUPPLY OF THIS TYPE MATERIAL. END FYI. KISSINGER

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